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CHANGE IN THE COLOR OF THE HAIR,
FROM THE WHITE HAIR OF
OLD AGE TO BLACK,

PRODUCED BY JABORANDI.

BY

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THE following case is reported, as adding another to the evidence that jaborandi will produce the effect mentioned under favorable circumstances :

Mrs. L., aged 72 years, suffering from Bright's disease, contracted kidney. Hair and eyebrows have been snow-white for twenty years. Suffered greatly from itching of the skin, due to the uræmia of the kidney-disease. Skin harsh and dry.

For this symptom fld. ext. of jaborandi was prescribed, with the effect of relieving the itching. It was taken in doses of 20 or 30 drops, several times a day, from October, 1886, to February, 1888.

During the fall of 1887 it was noticed by the nurse that the eyebrows were growing darker, and that the hair of the head was darker in patches. These patches and the eyebrows continued to become darker, until at the time of her death they were quite black, the black tufts on the head presenting

a very curious appearance among the silver-white hair surrounding them.

In the *Phila. Med. Times* of July 2, 1881, I published a case entitled "Remarkable Change in the Color of the Hair from Light Blonde to Black in a Patient while under Treatment by Pilocarpine. Report of a Case of Pyelo-Nephritis, with unusually prolonged Anuria." This was a case of a lady, 25 years of age, and the drug was used to relieve the uræmic symptoms resulting from the anuria, which latter was extreme.

A record was kept of the amount of urine excreted, and this shows that on one occasion, from December 16 to December 23, a period of seven days, not a drop of urine was passed, and that from January 22, 1881, to February 2, eleven days, there was total anuria.

From January 22 to February 11 (twenty-one days), but thirty-six grammes, or a little over two ounces of urine, were passed. During this time the catheter was used twice daily. The uræmic symptoms were very marked and distressing, consisting of dry skin, continual vomiting, severe headache, insomnia, muscular twitchings, confusion of vision, delirium, and threatened convulsions. Hot baths and hot packs did not cause sweating, and gave no relief.

On December 16, 1880, treatment of pilocarpine hydrochlorate hypodermically was commenced, the dose given being 1 centigramme (gr. $\frac{1}{2}$). The effect of this was very prompt, and the sweating and salivation produced most profuse. The relief to the uræmic symptoms was complete, the patient falling into a quiet sleep as soon as the effect of

the drug ceased, and sleeping all night, awaking in the morning bright and refreshed. The pilocarpine was thus used twenty-two times from December 16, 1880, to February 22, 1881, requiring thirty-five or forty centigrammes.

As the patient became accustomed to the medicine it was found necessary to give 2 centigrammes at a dose.

After February 22 she began to improve, and no more was required.

Change in Color of the Hair.—All her life up to November, 1880, the hair was a light blonde. Four specimens of the hair were sent to the editor of the *Phila. Med. Times*, with the report of the case, for his inspection, and were as follows :

“ 1. *November, 1879.*

“ 2. *November, 1880.*—Both the same color, —a light blonde, with tinge of yellow.

“ 3. *January 12, 1881.*—A chestnut brown ; and—

“ 4. *May 1, 1881.*—Almost a pure black.”

The growth of hair was also more vigorous, and individual hairs thicker.

I believed at the time, and still believe, that this change of color was caused by the pilocarpine. The lady is still at this date (March 10, 1889) under my observation. Her hair is now dark brown, having returned to that color from black. The full report of this case can be found in the *Phila. Med. Times* for July 2, 1881.

At the time the case was reported, the facts as stated were received with considerable incredulity, the editor of one well-known Western medical journal openly refusing them

credit. Others preferred the charge that the lady had formerly bleached her hair, and that when this was no longer possible her hair returned to its original color.

In reply to these "suggestions," I will only say that all the facts are known to scores of people at her home in Washington, D. C., and are entirely beyond question.

As illustrating the ubiquity of the daily press, and the ease with which all sorts of nostrums, valueless or otherwise, may be brought into notice through the newspapers, and how easy it is to make such a matter profitable to the advertiser, I mention an incident in connection with the case just reported.

It seems that some enterprising newspaper man became cognizant of the case, and put a short notice in a New York daily paper, to the effect that a drug had been discovered that would turn white hair black, and make hair grow on bald heads, giving my name as being connected with the Smithsonian Institution.

This paragraph must have been extensively copied in newspapers both throughout this country and abroad. The first intimation I had of its existence was an avalanche of letters from all parts of the country wanting information, some offering money for the receipt, others enclosing money in advance, which latter, be it known, I at once returned.

One from London, England, enclosing the half of a two-dollar bill, with the information that the other half would be speedily forthcoming on receipt of the formula or medicine.

One from a hair-dresser, Geneva, Switzerland, offering to go in partnership and divide profits.

The majority of the inquiries were from gray heads, the remainder from victims of alopecia.

Another interesting example of newspaper enterprise was the publication about the time referred to, in a New York Sunday paper, of the case of the wife of a sea captain in France, representing that it was taken from a French journal of science.

The captain commanded a steamer plying between Marseilles and Alexandria. He had recently married a young wife,—a blonde.

The wife became sick with kidney-trouble, and during her husband's absence was sent to her home in the Province of Toulon, where she was treated by the use of pilocarpine, and recovered.

Subsequently she went to meet the husband upon his return from Alexandria. On the quay, when the captain came ashore, a dark-haired woman, with black eyebrows and a pronounced moustache, threw her arms around him, and claimed him for her husband.

He repelled her. Oh, no, his wife had beautiful blonde hair. He would have nothing to do with her.

She followed him to their home, but was denied admission. Finally, as a last resort, she brought suit in the court for recognition of her rights.

Then followed a detailed account of the lawsuit, names of court, judge, etc., being given.

The captain was finally convinced that she was his lawful wife, having been transformed by that nefarious drug pilocarpine.

Alas ! for the correctness of this romance. I searched the files of the French journal in vain. The proceedings of the court in question knew nothing of the virtuous captain and his sad spouse.

I wrote to the editor of the New York Sunday paper for the name of the writer of the article, and received for reply that it was Dr. D., but he had gone to Chicago, and it was not known when he would return. To this date I have not found Dr. D.

